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ON MOST MAPS BUT WHICH PROBABLY IS ON THE ROAD, SUCH AS IT IS, BETWEEN ALMATY AND URMQI. THE CALLER INDICATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME QUESTION AS TO THE VALIDITY OF THE TRAVELLERS' DOCUMENTS AND VISAS AND AN INVESTIGATION WAS UNDERTAKEN. THE CHINESE OFFICIAL ALSO STATED THAT THE INVESTIGATION WITH RESPECT TO HOWELL WAS "CONCLUDED." NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED.

4. WE HAVE COMMENCED LOW-KEY INQUIRIES TO DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION BUT AS YET DO NOT KNOW WHETHER EITHER TRAVELLER WAS, OR IS STILL, DETAINED, OR WHETHER EITHER OR BOTH WERE ADMITTED OR DENIED ENTRY TO THE PRC. WITHOUT SERIOUSLY COMPROMISING WU'S IDENTITY WE CANNOT PRESS MUCH HARDER FOR INFORMATION BUT WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THIS WITH THE CHINESE AS IF IT WERE SIMPLY A ROUTINE WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS CASE. AS PRC GOVERNMENT OFFICES NO LONGER WORK ON SATURDAYS, WE DO NOT EXPECT TO HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION UNTIL MONDAY, JUNE 26. WE WILL REPORT ALL RESULTS OF OUR INQUIRIES IMMEDIATELY.

5. COMMENT: THE PHONE CALL FROM THE MFA CONSULAR DEPARTMENT WAS UNUSUAL BUT NOT UNPRECEDENTED. IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT ONLY HOWELL'S CASE WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN "CONCLUDED." HALLFORD

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